

Iran talks tough on islands

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran would fight to keep every "millimetre" of the three strategic Gulf islands claimed also by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said: "These islands are historically part of Iran and we would not retreat from even one millimetre of them," the minister said, referring to the disputed islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tumb and Lesser Tumb. Mr. Velayati, who was speaking to a group of Revolutionary Guards' commanders, said Iran would first try to resolve the problem with the UAE through political means, but would defend itself if pressured or invaded. Mr. Velayati's remarks were published by Tehran newspapers Saturday. Iran and the UAE, which also claims sovereignty over the islands in the southern Gulf, were scheduled to resume negotiations over the disputed territory in September. But last week Abu Dhabi cancelled a trip by the UAE's minister of state for foreign affairs, Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, after Iran reaffirmed on Sept. 8 its sovereignty over the islands. "UAE is convinced that there is no desire on the Iranian side to ensure the success of the visit," said a UAE spokesman.

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PCC to meet in two weeks

TUNIS (AFP) — A meeting of the Palestine Central Council (PCC) is to be held in two weeks to endorse the agreement on Palestinian autonomy signed with Israel, a senior Palestinian official said here Saturday. The meeting of the council was likely to be held in Tunis, said Executive Committee member Suleiman Najjar. Mr. Najjar said the meeting of the 100-member council would be preceded by a session of the decision-making Executive Committee, which approved the self-rule deal despite the dissent of two of its members. He ruled out an early meeting of the 400-strong Palestine National Council, the "parliament-in-exile" whose members are dispersed around the world, but said "maybe one can be held in Jericho," which receives autonomy next month along with the Gaza Strip.

Bouez criticises Israeli-PLO accord

CAIRO (AFP) — Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez Saturday criticised the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord, saying his country wanted to see "more extended" Palestinian powers in the autonomous areas. Mr. Bouez, here to take part in Sunday's meeting of the foreign ministers of Arab League countries (see separate story), said he had some "observations" to make on the accord "in particular on the subject of the return of Palestinian refugees," especially those in Lebanon. He said inter-Arab differences were "unacceptable" currently because "we are embarking on a very important phase."

Guerrillas attack SLA positions

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Guerrillas attacked posts manned by Israel's surrogate South Lebanon (SLA) militia Saturday. Security sources said no casualties were reported. The sources said the guerrillas fired several mortar rounds at an SLA post in Shoumariyah in the central sector of Israel's self-styled "security zone" at 8:30 a.m. (0530 GMT). They said the guerrillas also had attacked Shoumariyah and another SLA post in Rashed with rocket-propelled grenades at midnight (2100 GMT). The attacks were claimed by the Islamic Resistance, the military wing of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah. An Islamic resistance communiqué said the assaults inflicted "several Israeli casualties."

Hizbullah-army tension in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — Tension ran high in a Beirut neighbourhood on Saturday after Lebanese troops briefly detained members of the pro-Iranian Hizbullah, witnesses said. The incident occurred a day before a rally called by the group to commemorate the killing by troops of protesters opposing an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal. Hizbullah announced the rally in a Beirut suburb despite a government ban on demonstrations. Witnesses said Hizbullah men, armed with U.S.-made M-16 assault rifles, took to the streets of Wadi Abu Jni' district of Beirut after two comrades were detained at an army checkpoint in the area.

Israel rejects referendum on deal

TEL AVIV (R) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Saturday rejected a call by Israeli opposition parties for a national referendum on the Palestinian self-rule deal signed on Monday in Washington. Mr. Peres told Israel Radio a referendum would limit Israel's ability to negotiate. "Every time the other party will ask, 'okay, are you empowered to make a decision,' we have to turn to a referendum," he said. The opposition Likud party, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, has repeatedly demanded a referendum on the deal with the PLO which it says is a step towards the formation of a Palestinian state (see page 2). Mr. Peres said: "When the Likud decided to give back the last inch of Sinai, did they make a referendum?"

King: No step yet to delay polls, but situation under study

HM underlines need for national unity and cohesion at 'these sensitive times'

Jordan supports Palestinian decision and seeks increased coordination with PLO

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Hussein told a group of prominent journalists and writers Saturday.

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday plans to hold parliamentary elections on Nov. 8 remain unchanged, even though Jordan is "seriously considering the implications and possibilities of many of the questions to which we have no answers," in the wake of the Palestinian-Israeli self-rule agreement.

Among the possibilities that the King cited as reasons for reconsidering holding the elections as scheduled were possible attempts to raise the autonomy agreement during the elections in a way that might harm national unity.

King Hussein also cited the unique demographic composition of Jordan that might be affected by the decision of some Palestinians to return to the occupied territories, an issue which he said will be discussed with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat when he visits Jordan later this week.

"Protecting democracy is a commitment and a duty and a march on a direction from which there is no going back," King

The King said 1974 marked a turning point from a situation

where Jordan tried to recover the occupied territories, to a new situation where "we accepted the independence of the Palestinian decision, at the Palestinian and Arab request." He said, however, that Jordan did not work to

liberate the occupied territories so that they (the Palestinians) would go back to it, but in order to allow its people to decide what they wanted.

King Hussein confirmed Jor-

dan's decision to no longer provide the Palestinians with an "umbrella" to attend the peace talks because it is not needed any more, adding that the mechanism was used to enable the Palestinians to represent themselves in

the negotiations.

"Jordan will continue to provide utmost support for the Palestinian people," said the King, emphasising that Jordan will work to strengthen relations with the PLO.

Though expressing dissatisfaction with the previous level of coordination that the PLO maintained with Jordan, King Hussein said Jordan will seek better coordination with the organisation.

In response to a question, the King said "the situation" could have been better had there been closer coordination among Arab parties, saying that lack of confidence could have been the reason behind the lack of coordination.

"We will soon receive Chairman Arafat and we will be at the gates of a new era of real coordination, or such will be our position and we hope that we will rise to the required level to deal with the sensitive circumstances whose outcome will reflect on the future generations," King Hussein said.

The King also said that coordination among Arab states in general is below the required level, adding that it is "illogical that the situation remains as it

is." Referring to Jordan's position on the 1990-91 Gulf crisis and war, King Hussein said that Jordan never supported any party against the other but was mainly concerned with protecting the Arab World and people from a disaster and finding an Arab solution to the conflict.

"We stand by Iraq and the people of Iraq and we will continue to stand by (the people) of Iraq, in which, according to a report by UNICEF, the number of children who die because of lack of food and medicine will rise to a million in the coming few months," the King said.

"We were concerned for Kuwait and concerned for Saudi Arabia and concerned for Iraq and all parts of the Arab World," the King emphasised.

In that light, Jordan has nothing to apologise for, King Hussein said, recalling demands, which he did not specify, from Arab Gulf states that Jordan apologise for its position before Arab reconciliation could begin.

"But under the circumstances, if I was to apologise for any personal offence that I might

(Continued on page 5).

Palestine's capital will be East Jerusalem — Arafat

HAMBURG (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said in an interview appearing Monday that he hoped to announce soon the creation of an independent Palestinian state with Arab East Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. Arafat told the German weekly *Der Spiegel* that "Palestinians and Israelis will live in peace side by side in Jerusalem," and that West Jerusalem would remain the capital of the Jewish state.

In an excerpt released by the magazine Saturday, Mr. Arafat said the future of the Palestinian state rests in "the framework of a confederation with Jordan."

Turning to the PLO-Israeli autonomy pact signed Monday in Washington, Mr. Arafat said the accord was "the best that could be achieved given current relations in the Arab World, and the new world order."

He said criticism that his actions had irritated Syria and harmed Damascus in its talks with Israel over recovering the Golan Heights was baseless.

"I know that our Syrian friends have prepared several proposals to solve the problem of the

Golan," he said. "As far as I know, Syria will sign an agreement with Israel in the near future, as will Lebanon and Jordan," he said.

Once all the bilateral agreements are signed, "all the Arab states will reach peace accords with Israel," the PLO leader added.

Mr. Arafat is due to visit Egypt on Sunday to brief Arab foreign ministers at Arab League headquarters on details of the accord.

Reopening U.S. office

The United States has discussed with the PLO the opening of an office in Washington once Congress lifts certain restrictions, a State Department spokesman said Friday.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said the talks took place earlier this week when Mr. Arafat was in Washington for the signing of the peace accord with Israel.

Earlier Friday in Amman, Palestinian peace negotiator Saeb Erakat said the PLO will set up a diplomatic representation in the United States within weeks at the same level as its delegation in France.

(Continued on page 5)

Damascus alliance calls on Palestinians to foil peace plan

Combined agency dispatches

DAMASCUS — Ten groups opposed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel peace accord, on Saturday urged Palestinians to work to foil the pact and warned it could lead to a Palestinian "civil war."

Opponents of the agreement, which provides for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, hope to forge a cohesive front against PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

They charge that Mr. Arafat, who witnessed the signing of the accord in Washington last Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, has abandoned the goal of an independent Palestinian homeland.

Mr. Arafat has argued that the autonomy agreement will lead, in time, to independence.

The groups issued a statement condemning the agreement as a means "to establish a greater Israel which plans to control the Middle East economically, politically and militarily."

It was especially critical of Mr. Arafat, saying he "has been misleading the Palestinians. Arabs

and Muslims ... to promote the disgraceful agreement, which implies the dangers of a civil war among the Palestinians."

It called on Palestinians "to intensify struggle in order to foil the Arafat-Rabin agreement" with the goal of "full liberation of Palestine, with its capital in Jerusalem."

The opposition groups, while united against the pact, have widely differing ideologies and may find it hard to coordinate any campaign.

They range from the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas, most active in the Gaza Strip, which rejects any dealings with the Jewish state and calls for its destruction, to PLO factions that advocate working through Palestinian institutions to subvert the accord.

Earlier Saturday, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad met with a visiting Iranian diplomat in Damascus to help coordinate opposition to the PLO-Israel pact.

He repeated earlier Hamas demands that it had signed a nonviolence agreement with Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction.

Mr. Assad, in an interview with the weekly newspaper *Akhbar Al Yom*, said he had planned to visit Egypt last week but had to delay the trip because of a slight illness.

(Continued on page 5)

Rabin, Assad to visit Egypt

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

will travel to Egypt for a surprise

summit with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, a spokesman

said Saturday.

Mr. Rabin will leave Sunday,

spending "several hours" in

meeting with Mr. Mubarak in Alexan-

dras said the spokesman in Mr. Rabin's office, David Kleizel.

Another spokesman, Gad Ben

Ari, said the Israeli premier

would fly to Egypt following a

cabinet meeting and would return to

Israel in the evening.

Congress in 1987 closed down

the PLO's offices in New York

and Washington.

Mr. McCurry said the White

House and Congress will hold

discussions next week to work out

a possible timetable for striking

the statutes from the books.

"We've generally indicated

that we're willing to address those

restrictions in a way that would

allow us to continue a dialogue

that would be valuable to the

King.

After signing a peace treaty

with Palestine Liberation Organi-

zation (PLO) Chairman Yasser

Arafat in Washington this week,

Mr. Rabin made a surprise trip to

Morocco, where he met with King Hassan II. There was also

speculation that Mr. Rabin might

travel to Tunisia after his trip to

Morocco, but he returned to

Israel because of the Jewish New

Year.

Mr. Rabin last met the Egyptian

president on April 14

although Foreign Minister Shimon

Peres, who signed the historic

autonomy agreement at the

White House on Monday, visited

the King in July.

Mr. Peres said Saturday that

Egypt and Morocco were ex-

tremely important for the PLO.

The PLO has almost nobody

to turn to, apart from Egypt —

which has played an important

role here — and Morocco," Mr.

Peres said in an Israeli Radio

interview.

But he has not prevented the

groups opposed to the pact from

using the Syrian capital as a base.

Many of the factions are head-

quartered in Damascus.

Mr. Sheikholeslam met here

Friday night with senior Hamas

leader Mustafa Lidawi.

Middle East News

Rabin may be forced to referendum to shore up peacemaking

By Nicolas B. Tatro
The Associated Press

TEL AVIV — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's choice of hand-shake partners will be tested and his peace initiative with Yasser Arafat may squeak through by a tiny margin in parliament next week.

If so, Mr. Rabin will have to find a way to mobilise public opinion or lose momentum towards the next breakthrough — an agreement with Syria.

His choices are a referendum or new elections.

The showdown comes Monday, when the Knesset, Israel's parliament, begins debate on the peace package signed in Washington with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). A vote is expected Tuesday.

The proposal for a non-binding

poll may be hard to refuse because it comes from Shas, the ultra-religious party of Sephardic Jews that holds six key seats in its 120-member parliament.

"This is the only guarantee that future agreements will not be attacked as having been made by a minority government," said Shas leader Aryeh Deri.

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The proposal for a non-binding

get a fragile one-vote majority of approval. Some Labour Party officials argue that such a victory is good enough but Mr. Rabin wants a Jewish majority in parliament, one that does not rely on pro-PLO activists.

Nissim Zvili, secretary-general of Labour, did not rule out a referendum but said that could stop the peace process just as it was gathering steam.

"From one side, I would like very much to have a vote. We feel we have a very big majority that supports the agreement. From the other side, I would not like to stop the process," said Mr. Zvili.

Insiders suggest Mr. Rabin has been reluctant to pile too much change on Israel at once and wants the Golan issue not to be rushed until there are clear indications of public support. Hence, a referendum may become attractive — especially if it heals the rift with Shas.

Mr. Deri, 33, the leading proponent of a referendum, is the protege of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual leader of the party with a vast following among Sephardi Jews from Middle East and North African countries.

Right-wing sloganneering

against ceding the Golan has had more of an impact on Israel's landscape than the PLO issue.

Farm fields, sides of buildings, car bumpers and billboards throughout the country have signs saying "Peace with the Golan" and "Don't move from the Golan."

Leaders of the opposition Likud bloc are against a referendum, with Binyamin Netanyahu saying it could not be fair because the government would be phrasing the question. Mr. Netanyahu proposed early elections, but they are not expected to succeed in parliament unless Labour lost a referendum.

The Likud head argued that an election now would test not only Israeli support for the agreement, but how negotiations are pursued on subjects like security for Israelis, the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinians.

"These questions can be answered only in the new elections, and the public should be able to decide who will carry out the future negotiations," he said on Israel Radio. Elections are scheduled for 1996.

Rabbi Yosef broke with the ultra-religious Ashkenazi parties in backing Labour after the 1992 elections and has made an important religious ruling that "pikuah nefesh," the saving of life, justifies giving up Israeli-held land for peace.

But the Iraqi-born Yosef, 73, is wavering in his support for the government because Mr. Deri was forced to resign as interior minister this week.

Mr. Deri resigned after police charged that he channelled \$250,000 in government funds to the coffers of the Shas Party and for his own personal benefit. Party members claimed that bias against Sephardim was behind the corruption investigations.

A referendum might clear the way for Shas to stay in the coalition, especially because it was a Shas proposal.

U.S., Israel pressure Syria, Hawatmeh says

DAMASCUS (R) — A Palestinian leader said Friday the United States and Israel were piling pressure on Syria to silence opposition to a Palestinian-Israeli peace deal but predicted Damascus would not respond.

Nayef Hawatmeh of the Damascus wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) told a news conference that Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam had told him of the pressure and had pledged support for resistance groups.

"Syria will support our people in their struggle for self-determination and to solve the problem of the refugees because more than 50 per cent of our people are living outside the occupied territories," Mr. Hawatmeh said, referring to assurances he had received from Mr. Khaddam.

Mr. Hawatmeh said DFLP delegation met with Mr. Khaddam on Thursday.

"During our talks ... we told us of U.S. and Israeli pressure to restrict Palestinian opposition to the deal," Mr. Hawatmeh said.

Mr. Khaddam said Syria's response was that there was opposition in Israel "so why not ask (Israeli Premier Yitzhak) Rabin to restrict opposition there?"

"... Syria will not allow such pressure from the American administration and the Rabin government," Mr. Hawatmeh said.

He did not say who had asked Syria to help restrain Palestinian opposition or when the approaches were made.

U.S. President Bill Clinton telephoned Syrian President Hafez Al Assad twice in the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

No advance had been made on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace talks in 11 rounds over almost two years.

Mr. Hawatmeh said he and Mr. Khaddam had "agreed there was no agreement worse than the

Photographers fired on by U.S. forces in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AP) — A British photographer for the Associated Press was fired on with stun grenades from a U.S. helicopter Saturday, apparently to block him from photographing the aircraft in action.

Peter Northall and a Somali translator, Mohammad Hussein Jinade, said at least six of the small grenades exploded around them as Mr. Northall was taking pictures of the helicopter flying low to chase crowds from a street market.

The soldiers on the chopper began firing after waving at him to leave the area, Mr. Northall said. The blast of one grenade forced him backward, he said. Another blew out the back window of his nearby van.

"I saw a flash on the ground about two feet in front of me," Mr. Northall said. "That was the one that knocked me backward."

Mr. Northall said the U.S. soldiers aboard the Blackhawk helicopter continued to fire the grenades at him even after he held out his two cameras at arms length to identify himself as a photographer.

The aircraft was only about 30 to 40 metres away so the soldiers should have been able to see him, Mr. Northall said. He added that the soldiers apparently did not want him to take pictures of the helicopter using its downramp to empty the street, turning over market stalls in the process.

Mr. Jinade and two other Somali employees of the AP were inside the van when the back window was blown out, spraying glass but injuring no one.

The European Community (EC) has already committed itself to a contribution of around \$600 million.

GCC states Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were the biggest financial backers of the PLO until they cut off the aid in 1990 for its pro-Iraqi stand during the Gulf crisis.

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His Majesty King Hussein Saturday confers the Independence Medal of the First Order on journalist Mohammad Daoudi (Petra photo)

King eulogises Abdul Rahim Omar

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday paid tribute to the late journalist Abdul Rahim Omar who died last week at the age of 64.

"I hereby recall a dear brother who attended my last meeting with the journalists but who has passed away since, and is no more with us today," said King Hussein during a meeting with the journalists at the Royal Court.

"I remember his long struggle

and his relentless efforts at the literary and political levels," said King Hussein in praise of Mr. Omar.

"My deep condolences to everyone of you for the loss of this writer and may God bless his soul," concluded the King.

Abdul Rahim Omar died after undergoing cardiac surgery in London.

Mr. Omar was regarded by

other writers and friends, as well as his readers, as a "great man and a real poet."

King Hussein Saturday conferred the Jordan Independence Medal of the First Order to Mr. Daoudi at the Royal Court in recognition of his dedicated services and efforts during his work at the Royal Court.

The King presented the medal to Mr. Daoudi at the Royal Court in recognition of his dedicated services and efforts during his work at the Royal Court.



University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharabeh (centre) Saturday addresses the opening of a six-day workshop on problem solving for better health

Health care professionals begin 6-day workshop

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two workshops on problem solving for better health opened at the University of Jordan Saturday with the participation of 50 doctors and nurses representing various private and public organisations in Jordan.

In the six-day meetings, lecturers from India, the U.S. and Poland, as well as Jordan, will address means of improving primary health services in the

Kingdom.

In an opening address University President Fawzi Gharabeh said the complicated health problems facing the country require closer cooperation on the part of health workers to offer the public better primary health care at all institutions.

Training of health workers in various medical professions is a necessary practice, and participation in health conferences and

workshops is vital because the meetings and exchange of information help find solutions to basic health problems, said Dr. Gharabeh.

Director of the university's Educational Centre for the Development of Manpower in the Health Field Muawri Gharabeh, said the Jordanian lecturers at the meetings have acquired sufficient training and prepared for the workshops in the last two years.

Bird enthusiasts to start awareness campaign

AMMAN (Petra) — A newly-established Jordanian Committee for Wild Bird in Jordan announced Saturday that it will soon embark a wide-scale public awareness campaign about birds.

Adnan Badrini, the committee's rapporteur, said the panel will try to disseminate information about the types of birds in the Kingdom, how to provide protection for them as they are a national wealth, as well as how to allow the birds to breed safely.

The committee, formed under the umbrella of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), decided at a recent meeting to work out its main objectives and make them known.

AMMAN — The government is studying the structure of joint Jordanian-Palestinian committees to discuss ties between the East and West Banks of the River of Jordan ahead of the implementation of the Israel-Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement on autonomy in the occupied territories, official sources said Saturday.

The sources said a decision was announced Thursday after a meeting between Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and PLO Political Department head Farouk Al Kaddoumi to form a higher joint committee and sub-committees did not necessarily mean that six joint panels set up in July were disbanded.

"It is possible that orientation of the committees will change to a negotiating mode," said a senior official. "All options are under study, but what is more important is a clear basis of understanding

on both sides that coordination and cooperation are beneficial to all."

The six committees, announced on July 10 but formed in August, were entrusted with the task of discussing cooperative issues related to refugees, economy, border and security, water, the environment and regional security.

Only two of the committees have met so far: the Economic Committees headed by Marwan Dardin, a member of the Jordanian peace negotiating team and a former minister, and the Border and Security Affairs Committee headed by Abdullah Tuqan.

Mr. Dardin, who served as minister of occupied territories affairs before the portfolio was abolished in line with Jordan's July 1988 decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, also heads the committee on refugees.

Munther Haddadin, also a Jordanian negotiator and former head of the Jordan Valley Au-

thority, heads the Water Committees.

The PLO delayed its nomination of the Palestinian side to the committees for over a month. Although no explanations were available, it was believed that the organisation's preoccupation with its secret negotiations with Israel in Oslo, Norway, and the uncertainties surrounding the talks prompted the delay.

Jordan was not a party to the secret talks and was not consulted on the details of the autonomy agreement.

After initial reservations, however, Jordan supported the agreement, expressing hope that it would lead to a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict based on U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and international legitimacy.

The general idea behind the formation of the committees was to crystallise the shape of ties between the two banks against the backdrop of a possible

Jordanian-Palestinian confederation after the Palestinians regain their complete rights.

Although the confederation proposal or other ideas for future ties remain alive, the newfound independent negotiating status of the Palestinians and the separation of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks have brought about the necessity to revamp the committees.

The mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel and their autonomy agreement signed this month did away with the need for the joint delegation. Under the joint team formula, a Jordanian delegate attended all bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and a Palestinian delegate attended Israeli-Jordanian negotiations. Under the new realities, Jordan is studying the complementary between the various committees with a view to safeguarding its national interests, the sources said.

"There are many issues that overlap each other and the main objective now is to tie them together so that loose ends and duplication of work are eliminated," said the senior source.

According to the source, there is little need to change the Jordanian representatives in the committees.

"All of them could easily be described as the best Jordan has," he said. "They have excellent records and expertise in their various fields of specialisation."

Dates have yet to be set for the committees' next meeting.

Palestinian sources said the PLO may also want to reorient the Palestinian side to the panels.

"The extent of possible changes in the shape of the Palestinian side to the delegations is not clear yet," said a PLO source. "The matter is under study in Tunis."

Other sources said one of the issues that would be taken up during an expected visit of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to Jordan this week is the committees and their tasks.

IAF to announce candidates Monday

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF), Jordan's best known political party, will announce its list of candidates for the scheduled November 8 legislative elections within the next 24 hours, said a spokesman for the party Saturday.

The party, an umbrella group for the Muslim Brotherhood movement and independent Islamists who won 22 seats in the 1989 elections, is expected to field at least 35 candidates, according to a spokesman at the party headquarters.

Ishak Farhan, the party's secretary general, said the IAF would field candidates in 50 per cent or more of the Kingdom's 20 electoral districts.

About 70 per cent of the IAF members elected to the country's 11th Parliament are expected to be re-nominated by their party. One notable exception is Mamduh Al Hawamdeh who, along with the maverick Sheikh Abdul Mumen Abu Zant, swept votes in the predominantly conservative second district of Amman

in 1989.

Yousef Al Athem, a prominent Islamic educator who garnered the highest number of votes in the southern Ma'an district, is also expected to decline from the Lower House of Parliament race, for health reasons.

The IAF strongly opposed the recent change in the electoral law which limited to one the number of candidates a voter could elect.

Most political observers believe that the change, known as the "one-person-one-vote clause," would limit the number of IAF candidates that could win seats in the Lower House.

Mr. Farhan, in a recent interview with the Jordan Times, thought otherwise. "It might not increase the number greatly, but it won't reduce them."

"At a time when questions of belonging and identity and of international standing of the Arab World are being posed," said Mr. Farhan, "Islam is the greatest uniting and binding factor."

The IAF was among the first ten of some twenty political

parties that won legal status in the Kingdom and was the political group to enjoy organisational freedoms in the last 30 years.

In the late 1950's many Brotherhood members found political refuge in Jordan from pan-Arab and socialist regimes in the region. As loyal supporters of the monarchy, the group was given a free hand in the field of education and some aspects of social discipline until 1989 when they came into full force as a mainly political organisation during the first legislative elections in three decades.

Controlling more than one quarter of the seats in the Lower House and one-third with independent Islamists, the group, that legally became the IAF in December 1992, tried to implement strict Islamist teachings through legislation.

Five members of the group became Cabinet members in the government of Mudar Badran in 1990. Mr. Badran had first opened up the Ministry of Education to Brotherhood members in the early 1970's — the beginning of strong Brotherhood influence among

Jordanian youth.

Many of the IAF attempts to introduce new and amend old legislation failed, but created fear among the secular elements in Jordanian society.

A leading middle-of-the-road IAF member, Balqa's Deputy Abdul Latif Arabiya, was elected to three (out of a total of four) consecutive terms as House speaker. Mr. Arabiya has told the Jordan Times he will run as an IAF candidate in the coming elections.

Domestically the IAF proposes to segregate the sexes in secondary schools, universities and the work place, ban the buying, consuming and manufacturing of alcoholic beverages except among Christians, impose an Islamic dress code and introduce the Zakat taxation of 2.5 per cent.

The group gave latent support to Iraq during the U.S.-led war against that country.

Traditionally opposed to all secular regimes in the region, the Brotherhood was pro-Iraq and anti-Saddam.

Its members refused Cabinet appointments after Jordan began participating in the Arab

and many of them are in ill repair, charged Mr. Qaimari.

He urged the ministry of education to conduct a search campaign and ensure that the schools abide by regulations concerning services and fees.

He said an inspection of the school registers can reveal the rate of salaries and school fees and would show that school classes are often overcrowded, making it difficult for the teachers and to carry out their task.

Mr. Awad also demanded strict control on private schools to force them to abide by ministry regulations.

His views were echoed by Mohammad Qaimari, member of the Private Schools Teachers Association (PSTA) board, who said private schools impose fees on the students at will, with no justification.

Many of the private schools, he continued, lack a healthy educational environment and proper services for teachers and students; and school buses are old

and many of them are in ill repair, charged Mr. Qaimari.

He urged the ministry of education to conduct a search campaign and ensure that the schools abide by regulations concerning services and fees.

He urged private schools to refuse to sign contracts offering high salaries unless they are quite sure that the school will honour the commitment. He also appealed to the ministry of education to put an end to such manipulation.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed date and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of children's paintings at the British Council.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Nouri Al Rawi at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Egyptian artist H. Biker at the Balqa' Art Gallery in Fuheis.
- ★ Paintings exhibition by Amor Aounis and Salam Kanaan at the Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Permanent exhibition of 58 artists and "Chair" Exhibition at Darat Al Funan of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibeh (10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fridays 10 a.m.-5 p.m.) Tel. 643251-2
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Bishara Najjar at Kabeelia Art Gallery, Amman Shopping Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Omar Al Boui entitled "Samples of Different Arts" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "Citizen Kane" at the American Centre at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Lecture entitled: "International Legitimacy: Is it a Cover or a Justification to Use Force?" by Mr. Salim Sweis at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.

CONTROLLING PHOSPHATE DUST

An automatic dust control system (choke feeders) at the phosphate exporting jetty at Aqaba Port controls phosphate dust emission with an absorption rate of 90%. Dust emitting from the phosphate exporting jetty at Aqaba Port as a result of loading operations had posed serious threats to human life and the environment in Aqaba city. Acting on the directions of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the port corporation recently completed the installation of two choke feeders on ship-loaders at the phosphate berth. The system, costing \$500,000, was installed and is operated by port personnel. The old phosphate ship-loader was renovated by port staff to enhance its dust control capacity. These efforts come in line with Aqaba port's plans to control pollution and maintain a clean and healthy environment.



Delegation leaves for multilateral talks

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian delegation left for Washington Saturday to take part in the meeting of a working group on regional economic cooperation within the framework of the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace talks. The meetings are due to start at the World Bank on Sept. 20. The delegation is led by Ministry of Planning Secretary General Safwan Touqan.

Poor water management threatens India's food supply

By Partha S. Banerjee

DALTONGUNJ, India — "I haven't eaten since yesterday. There is no food at home. No water, either." Buccha Munda, an aboriginal Indian tribesman of indeterminate age, speaks of his destination in an embarrassed stammer — and only after some prodding. "I found some work this morning, and so there will be some food today. We won't be starving."

At Bairakhera, a tiny hamlet in eastern India's Palamu district, it is 117 degrees in the shade, but Mr. Munda is not overly bothered by the heat. He wears a white scarf over his head as protection against the blistering sun and carries a catapult to hunt birds. Bird meat provides almost the only variation in his family's diet of wheatcakes and salt. "We can't afford any vegetables, but I am often lucky with my catapult," he said. For water, Mr. Munda must walk to Mahinwan village over a mile away — the well in Bairakhera has almost completely dried up.

A cluster of mud houses on a barren slope, Bairakhera is no Baidoa (Somalia). No one here is dying of starvation. But, like hundreds of other villages in Palamu district of Bihar state and in Kalahandi district of adjoining Orissa state, Bairakhera is showing the first symptoms of famine. With no rain since last August and steadily climbing temperatures, crops have failed for two successive years and wells have dried up. Like Buccha Munda, hundreds of thousands of people in the dry, eastern belt are waking up every other morning to no food. At least 50 people are reported to have died from starvation this year in the region, most in Kalahandi.

"Palamu and Kalahandi are still far removed from Somalia," said S. S. Mishra, a soil expert from India's Agriculture Ministry. "People have not been reduced to skin and bones. There are no shocking pictures here, but there is no mistaking the ominous signs of famine. The soil is degraded. It could get worse."

Last month, Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao flew to Palamu and Kalahandi to see for himself the extent of the drought. In Daltongunj, headquarters of Palamu district, he announced special federal relief assistance of \$60 million. Given India's size and resources, it is unlikely that a famine of African proportions will sweep its arid eastern belt, even if the rains fail again this year. Federal aid and foodgrains

rushed from outer parts of the country should keep disaster at bay, at least in the immediate future.

But Indian agricultural experts are worried beyond the immediate future. With a declining foodgrain production, they wonder whether the country will be able to support steadily expanding populations in the context of poor rainfall and recurring droughts. For two decades — since the late 1960s — India has not faced a food shortage, despite a 54-per-cent population increase, because of phenomenal agricultural growth. Foodgrain production shot up by 63 per cent between 1970-71 and 1990-91, to 176.2 million tonnes, a figure exceeded only by China, the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. As the spectre of starvation looms over certain districts, growth is reaching a plateau and even threatening to reverse.

As early as 1989, the Washington-based Worldwatch Institute warned that India could face a severe food and water crunch in the decade ahead. Since then, annual government economic surveys have corroborated that prediction, reporting declining agricultural growth. Last year's economic survey indicated a likely fall in foodgrain production by 1.5 per cent. In a country with the

world's largest irrigated area and where the success of the green revolution had ensured good self-sufficiency for two decades, that clearly was unsettling news.

Experts attribute India's declining farm output to land degradation. Deforestation and dredging of critical watersheds have upset the natural water cycle, causing more rain to run off in damaging floods and less water to percolate into the ground to recharge the aquifers. Even areas under irrigation are not doing well. Yields from some irrigated lands are half what agronomists say they could be. And because of the rising costs of maintaining irrigation networks, large sections of land under irrigation are not being farmed.

Worldwatch Institute's Sandra Postel, presenting the 1989 study, said India would need to double its irrigated acreage to ensure self-sufficiency in food in the 1990s. More important, she stressed, the country desperately needs to improve water management and check land degradation. "Water management is key," agreed agroecologist Jayanta Bandopadhyay of the Research Foundation for Science and Ecology, based in Dehra Dun in northern India. "Because of rain run-off and the degraded soil's poor water retention, even high

rainfall areas are now turning barren."

Palamu and Kalahandi are cases in point. The two eastern districts average an annual rainfall of 130 cm, more than many areas in India receive. It is also enough to tide over a poor rainfall year, provided the water does not run off the slopes. Last year in Palamu district, the total precipitation — averaged over 17 collection stations — was 65 cm. "It hasn't rained since August, not a drop," said Pramod Singh, vice president of the Palamu unit of the ruling Congress-I party. "And because the soil can hold no moisture due to surface run-off, the crops failed totally."

In Nawadib village, three miles from Bairakhera, Sister Valsa, a Roman Catholic nun from the southern state of Kerala runs a mission school and hospital. Over 300 children attend the primary school. The mission has also adopted 100 destitute families, providing them with free meals for a three-month period. "I would say a fifth of my students cannot get to eat regularly at home," said Sister Valsa. "We build some of them back after school and feed them a second time."

Twelve-year-old Santosh Majhi, one of the school's poorest students, speaks shyly, his eyes averted. "My father is a sharecropper, but there is no work in the farms this year," he said. "Last week, no one at home ate anything for three days in a row, except by brother and I. We are in school." Majhi's father, like millions of other unemployed sharecroppers in the drought-hit region, depends on the government's food-for-work scheme for subsistence. Excavating a 1-foot deep and 10-foot square tract of earth for roadbuilding fetches 4 kg of wheat. But work under the scheme is not always available.

In Kalahandi and adjoining districts in Orissa state, where droughts have recurred almost every year since the mid-1980s, a large part of the population has migrated to the cities in search of work. In many villages, only the very old and very young remain behind. At least 14 families are known to have sold their children in desperation.

Kumari Bhoi, who sold her 8-year-old daughter to a Brahmin priest for \$16, told the Indian Express newspaper she might be forced to sell her second child if the situation gets worse. Mrs. Bhoi's husband has tuberculosis and is disabled. After press re-

ports publicised her case, the state government advanced her 1,000 rupees (\$33) to launch a small business and provide her husband with a tricycle for the handicapped.

State governments in Bihar and Orissa have sought to downplay and often deny newspaper reports of starvation deaths and the distress sale of children. Bihar's Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav said recently that no one had died of hunger in his state, arguing that the deaths were caused by disease. But, countered Palamu's Congress-I vice president Pramod Singh, "if you get nothing to eat for 10 days, you are bound to fall ill." In 1989, the Orissa government was taken in court for discriminating against the poor. The court ruled against the government, ordering the administration to pay 25,000 rupees (over \$800) as compensation to the victim's family.

Tilak Dhari Singh, 35, of Dul-sulma village in Palamu district, who lost three children to starvation, described his family's helplessness and desperation as the children wasted away. "When the crops failed, I began frantic search for work. But work was scarce. There are few government food-for-work projects in the area. We ate maize paste and berries and roots. Most days we ate nothing. The children fell ill. I could not take them to the government hospital. I was too busy looking for work. I could not even afford the bus fare. In the third week of March, they died, one after the other, as we watched helplessly. My wife hasn't spoken since."

"Palamu represents the early version of the ultimate environmental crisis that could befall India," said A. Santosh Mathew, the district's deputy commissioner or chief administrator. "It's

where the mismatch between population growth and resources is among the most glaring." A hilly, forested region, most parts of the district are marginal farming areas, never meant to support large populations. Because of population pressure, more and more people have been pushed to this marginal zone. With deforestation and subsequent surface run-off and erosion of the precious topsoil, the groundwater table has sunk further and the land has become even less productive. The upshot — crop failures and a water crisis whenever the rains are inadequate.

When Prime Minister Rao visited Palamu last month, Mr. Mathew suggested an elaborate

and tie ridges — a kind of terracing — the scheme forces a greater percentage of water into the soil rather than over it," explained Mathew. "Essentially, the problem is one of water conservation."

Kamal Kar, a scientist with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, commented: "The problem in this country is mismanagement. Countries with much less rainfall and far worse soil — Israel, for instance — produce bumper crops. We need better water management, better farm management. Right now, it only seems that the droughts are going to get worse every year."

Added Mr. Mathew: "What we also need is sustained policy. As governments change, priorities change, and, with them, policies. With a little persistent effort, India can get over its drought problem and never fear famine."

— World News Link.



This peasant from eastern India looks for water in a dry river bed; deforestation, soil erosion and lack of rain have brought back the specter of famine (WNL photo).

Government launches '93-'97 plan

(Continued from page 1)

services, lifting the average per capita share of total consumption at constant prices to JD 776 at the end of the period and raising the average per capita income of GDP at constant prices to JD 894 at the end of 1997.

The minister stressed that the five-year plan was not a continuation of the previous plans, although there was a four-year lapse in economic planning from 1989 until 1993 during which an adjustment programme and an amended adjustment programme were drawn to bring about economic growth and monetary stability and eliminate structural imbalances.

"It is a new plan in terms of goals, methodology and operation," he said.

He summarised the most im-

portant aspects of the plan, which was approved by the council of ministers last week, as:

1) The crystallisation of economic policies instead of concentrating on executing development projects. As such, the new plan focused on developing the investment climate by having included the laws and regulations, the institutional framework and the bases which would widen the private sector role in investment and out a substitute of it.

2) Giving very high consideration to the social development dimension and to address the possible negative impacts of implementing the economic adjustment programme.

3) Giving the necessary long-term consideration to the role of the public sector in organisation and control within the course of upgrading government adminis-

tration to overcome bottlenecks that impede the private sector from playing its role.

4) Reviewing and updating the plan at the end of each year in light of results and changes on the local scene as well as foreign considerations to maintain the plan operative.

5) The harmonisation of the plan with the goals of the economic adjustment programme as the plan is part of the programme and out a substitute of it.

Dr. Paritz said local savings would increase steadily over the coming years and investments would be tapping these savings for 40 per cent of the need plan.

The rest of the funding, according to the minister, will come from international tenders and donors as well as foreign investors.

King: No decision yet to delay elections

(Continued from page 1)

in terms of its details and dimensions but finally took a stand that I could not but take. Neither I nor any one among you or in the Arab World can outbid the (Palestinians)," the King said in the 90-minute meeting.

Stressing that people should focus on the positive achievements of the agreement, the King said, "our story in the Middle East is that of missed opportunity."

The King said opportunities were lost in the past for two reasons. The first was that the Palestinians wanted to represent themselves and the second was that the majority in the Arab World had tended to go for the easy solutions through outbidding one another and trying to belittle the others.

King Hussein said Palestinians who choose to stay in Jordan will continue to receive full citizenship rights and can claim compensation for their rights in the occupied territories.

"The basic thing is that we maintain our integrity as a one national unit and not allow anybody to do harm to this country with the purpose of destroying it or hurting it ...," the King said.

The King urged the Palestinians to remain united despite

the negative consequences and increase positive elements that could lead to the goal of achieving just and comprehensive peace," the King said.

Responding to a question, King Hussein said real peace could not be achieved unless the issue of Jerusalem is solved in a way acceptable to all parties concerned.

King Hussein said the question of Palestinian refugees in Jordan will be discussed with the PLO along with other major issues of mutual concern.

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Study says Asian competitiveness gaining on U.S.

ZURICH (R) — The United States and other mature industrial countries still lead the world in international competitiveness, but Asian newcomers will probably overtake them, Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) said in a study published Friday.

The bank said economic growth in east Asia had been, on average, nearly triple that of the old industrial world. Hong Kong and Singapore were quickly coming into line with North America and Europe.

The analysis, in the latest issue of UBS International Finance, is based on data from 38 countries, including major members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and leading nations in Asia, Latin America and eastern Europe.

Employing special indices that measure each nation's ability to develop products, income, and employment opportunities for its people, it concluded that the U.S. economy still led the world.

But the report added that although the United States was 10 to 20 per cent ahead of Japan and large European countries and more than 60 per cent ahead of Korea, the largest newly industrialised country (NIC), its lead was steadily reducing.

Over the past decade Japan had halved its productivity gap with the United States, and most advanced European countries had also drawn closer to the United States.

The report said the United States was still slightly ahead of Switzerland, based on a measure of its resources (capital, labour, natural resources and management skills) and its efficiency in using those resources.

Both countries had comparable resources, but Switzerland was less efficient due to its cartels, farm subsidies and land-use restrictions.

Japan, in third place, had simi-

lar resources, but remained markedly inefficient due to its farm and land policies and limited financial market competition.

Looking ahead, the report said Japan should overtake the United States in around 1998, and Singapore could pass the United States just after the turn of the century and catch Japan in just over 10 years.

Korea, currently third-ranking NIC after Hong Kong and Singapore, could catch up with the United States by around 2008 and with Japan in about a generation, although its growth would slow from present levels.

The report said Thailand and China, from their much lower starting points, were well behind today's leaders. But in less than a generation Thailand could reach Singapore's current standard and China could attain the income level Koreans now enjoy.

It stressed that the strong growth of many Asian NICs was bound to slow, as it was based on low wages that workers would not tolerate indefinitely.

"Workers will not be content for ever with postponing consumption to sustain 40 per cent investment rates," it said. "As the fast growing countries catch up, pressures to improve social services will rise and threats from the next group of miracle countries will encourage recourse to similar protectionist measures as now slow more mature economies."

The study suggested that the crucial challenge for mature countries was to improve their ability to move "upscale" when confronted with low-wage competition.

Shifting away from subsidies and market protection appeared to offer more potential for achieving this than more widely discussed but also necessary efforts to increase investment in infrastructure, education and research, it said.

Saudi banks boost capital to meet BIS rule

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Several Saudi banks have boosted their capital while others are setting aside more funds for provisions to meet adequacy rules set by the Bank of International Settlement (BIS).

Five of the 12 commercial banks — Riyad Bank, the Saudi-Cairo Bank, Al Jazira Bank, Al Bank Al Saudi Al Fransi, and the Saudi British Bank — have raised their capital by around seven billion riyals (\$1.86 billion).

"Other banks, while they have not raised their capital, have largely boosted their shareholders' equity by transferring more funds for the general reserves," said Zahair Kaswani, a leading Gulf stockbroker.

Shareholders' equity of the banks, except the troubled National Commercial Bank (NCB), jumped by nearly 50 per cent to 22.5 billion riyals (\$6 billion) in 1992 from 15 billion riyals (\$4 billion) in 1991.

Their assets also rose, by around 14 per cent to 234.2 billion riyals (\$62.4 billion) from 206 billion riyals (\$55 billion).

The figures, obtained from the Arab Banking Union, show the average capital adequacy increased to around 9.6 per cent in 1992 from 7.2 per cent in 1991.

The 1992 average exceeded the eight per cent floor set by the BIS as an acceptable level for capital adequacy — the ratio between shareholders' equity and assets.

The ruling is intended to ensure banks worldwide have enough funds to face a financial crisis.

NCB, the biggest Gulf bank, also plans to increase its capital of around 30 million riyals (\$8 million) which is a fraction of its assets of 80 billion riyals (\$21.3 billion).

"Workers will not be content for ever with postponing consumption to sustain 40 per cent investment rates," it said. "As the fast growing countries catch up, pressures to improve social services will rise and threats from the next group of miracle countries will encourage recourse to similar protectionist measures as now slow more mature economies."

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Gaidar calls for urgent stabilisation measures in Russia

MOSCOW (R) — Yegor Gaidar, due to rejoin the Russian government next week, called Friday for urgent measures to curb inflation and stabilise monetary growth.

Mr. Gaidar, 37, told a conference of private firms in the southern city of Rostov-on-Don that though action was needed to stabilise Russia's economy.

"Stabilisation ... will demand tough decisions in the area of state expenditure, foreign economic activities and drastic changes in state purchasing policies," he said. His comments were reported by ITAR-TASS news agency.

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Economy

Moroccan industry hit by drastic power cuts

RABAT (R) — Moroccan factories are suffering from drastic power cuts caused by two years of drought.

The state utility Office National de l'Electricite (ONE) said Friday water reservoirs were nine-tenths empty and hydroelectric stations, which normally provide nearly a third of Morocco's electricity, were running at 38 per cent of their 687 megawatts capacity.

After the failure of appeals to save energy voluntarily, the ONE has cut supplies by 95 MW at

peak periods in Casablanca, where most Moroccan industries are located.

Several hundred factories are affected, notably in the textile, garment, cement, petroleum, printing, computer and building materials sectors. Domestic supplies have not been reduced.

The cuts are to be extended

soon to the town of Mohammédia

north of Casablanca where light

Africa to set up trade financing bank

ABU DHABI (AFP) — African states will create a bank to finance their flagging trade and have secured subscriptions from several Asian and European countries, an adviser to the project said Saturday.

Africim Bank will have a capital of \$750 million and could be based either in Cairo or Tunis, said Ismail Moulood Ould Daddah, who is touring wealthy Gulf Arab states to invite more subscriptions.

"The venue of the project will be decided by the general assembly who is to hold its first meeting in Abuja in the third week of

October. It will also announce the birth of the bank," he told AFP by telephone from Dubai.

Subscriptions have so far exceeded \$300 million but will continue even after the bank is established, he said.

African governments own 35 per cent of the project, while 40 per cent is held by the African private sector and the rest by foreign investors.

Africim Bank is the latest in a series of initiatives by the African Development Bank (ADB) to support the economies of African nations, which are reeling under poverty, famine, debt and slow

growth, according to Mr. Daddah, former Mauritanian ambassador in Egypt.

"It will finance the internal and external trade of African nations and will operate on a commercial basis," he said. "This will contribute to development as it will ensure financing for imports and exports, which have remained relatively low in the absence of foreign investors."

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JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1993 7

Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman seek to link stock markets

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Three Gulf Arab states are bolding talks on linking their stock markets as part of a plan to create a joint exchange in the region, a Gulf official was quoted on Saturday as saying.

Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman, the only countries in the region with official floors, have been in touch on opening up their markets to each other, said Hassan Al Nisif, Bahrain trade and agriculture undersecretary.

The number of banks and companies trading their shares in Saudi Arabia has steadily increased to reach 78 in 1992 and their capitalisation has hit 14.8 billion from \$10.6 billion in 1988.

Kuwait bad the busiest market in the GCC before it was crippled by the 1990 Iraqi invasion. It was started to recover with the registration of around 40 local and Gulf banks and companies but foreigners are still barred.

Bahrain's exchange has 30 banks and firms capitalised at \$4.4 billion while Oman has 75 institutions capitalised at \$1.5 billion.

In the UAE around 22 institutions with capitalisation of \$8.3 billion actively trade their shares.

"For the time being, I can say that the creation of a joint Gulf stock market is unrealistic because the circumstances do not allow that," Zuhair Kawasni, a leading UAE stockbroker, told AFP.

Haulers' strike in India hits industry, rail and shipyards

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Negotiations aimed at ending a three-

day-old strike by two million Indian truckers broke up overnight

without agreement, as shortages of food and other supplies worsened nationwide, officials said Saturday.

Chief ministers from 11 of India's 25 states said they would resume the talks with the All India Motor Transport Congress (AIMTC) to end the strike, called to back haulers' demands for the scrapping of a steep hike in highway fees.

AIMTC officials said "Friday's talks collapsed because of the hard line, taken by the chief ministers of the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Haryana and Gujarat.

"Our strike will continue. The country will be paralysed," warned AIMTC Vice President Ajay Pal Singh of the boycott to press for the scrapping of the 233 per cent hike in haulage fees

which became effective Sept. 1.

"Our condition is that the authorities must first scrap the fee," said the leader of the powerful union which spearheaded a six-day strike in August forcing authorities to abolish highway entry taxes in eight states.

The controversial haulage fee replaced the entry taxes imposed by the states on cargo trucks entering their territory.

Newspapers and officials reported widespread shortages of staple cereals saying the scarcities had doubled the price of vegetables and fruits in many parts of the country.

They reported disruptions in the supply of petrol and cooking fuel in cities and towns and said perishable goods were rotting in the farms.

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Georgians rally to save Sukhumi

SUKHUMI, Georgia (Agencies) — Rival Georgian armies put aside their differences and headed shoulder to shoulder to back Mr. Shevardnadze's appeal for help.

Supporters of ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who earlier this week attacked government militia in western Georgia, headed to Sukhumi with their erstwhile enemies.

The so-called "Zviadists" forces reopened a vital rail link to the port of Poti, which they had closed, to enable military equipment and men to get to the Abkhazian front.

Mr. Shevardnadze, feeling responsibility for the collapse of a ceasefire whose terms had left Sukhumi vulnerable to the surprise assault, pledged to stay in the city until its fate was decided "even if I am the last one (left here)."

"It is possible they (the rebels) will enter the town soon and there will be the most serious consequences," he said.

The Georgian military's press service in Sukhumi, regional capital of the breakaway Abkhazia province, said street fighting raged in the early hours Saturday in the northern suburbs.

Defence Minister Georgy Karashashvili has personally headed the operation in which the rebels had finally been pushed back.

The new fighting in Abkhazia shattered a July 28 Russian-brokered peace deal to which Mr. Shevardnadze nailed his personal authority and which he rammed through against the wishes of parliament.

Rival militias united across the turbulent country in the face of the Sukhumi crisis and rallied to back Mr. Shevardnadze's appeal for help.

It emerged Saturday that Mr. Shevardnadze had failed so far to get the full support from Russia which he regards as the key to the Abkhazia settlement.

Mr. Shevardnadze and Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev met Friday near the southern Russian town of Sochi to try and salvage the deal, Abkhazian rebel leader Vladislav Ardzinba failed to show up at the talks.

Mr. Shevardnadze said the talks had been constructive, but "the results were disconcerting. The introduction of additional peacekeeping force that was required is not taking place."

It was unclear how the Zviadists and pro-Shevardnadze Mkhedrioni militia would manage to move up the coast to Sukhumi, as the territory was nearly completely controlled by rebels.

Local news agencies said that about two thousand civilian volunteers also had left the capital Tbilisi for Sukhumi by air.

Sukhumi Saturday echoed to the crash of big guns and tanks of Georgian forces fired on Abkhaz rebel positions on the Gumista River, but there was little response from the rebel side after their morning attacks were repelled.

The military press service said however that intense fighting was continuing around the village of Shroma, set in hills about 15 kilometres north of the city.

As armed volunteers poured in, so refugees — many of whom had returned to their homes during

the truce — began to stream out of the city on pickup trucks and busses and carts.

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The military press service said

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As armed volunteers poured in, so

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the truce — began to stream out

of the city on pickup trucks and

busses and carts.

It emerged Saturday that Mr. Shevardnadze had failed so far to

get the full support from Russia which he regards as the key to the

Abkhazia settlement.

Mr. Shevardnadze and Russian

Defence Minister Pavel Grachev

met Friday near the southern

Russian town of Sochi to try and

salvage the deal, Abkhazian rebel

leader Vladislav Ardzinba failed

to show up at the talks.

Mr. Shevardnadze said the

talks had been constructive, but

"the results were disconcerting.

The introduction of additional

peacekeeping force that was

required is not taking place."

It was unclear how the Zviadists and pro-Shevardnadze Mkhedrioni militia would manage to move up the coast to Sukhumi, as the territory was nearly completely controlled by rebels.

Local news agencies said that about two thousand civilian

volunteers also had left the capital Tbilisi for Sukhumi by air.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Olympic flame to be lit in Stone-Age fashion

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (AP) — Lillehammer will go back to the Stone Age to light the Olympic flame for the Winter Games it will host next February. Competitors are to be held in Norway from next month to find out who can light a flame fastest by rubbing two sticks together, the Lillehammer Olympics Organizing Committee (LOOC) announced Friday. On November 27, the winner will rub his sticks together to make a fire in the fireplace at the home of the founder of Telemark Skiing, Sondre Norheim, in Mordedal in Telemark. For 75 days, the torch will then tour the mountains and fjords of Norway and even go out to a North Sea oil platform. It will meet up with the Olympic flame from Greece in Oslo February 5. The opening ceremony will be in Lillehammer February 12.

Sampras falls to Agassi

PHOENIX (AP) — Pete Sampras, the first American to win Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in the same year since John McEnroe in 1984, was no match for Andre Agassi. Facing each other in a Thursday night exhibition, Agassi routed the new U.S. Open champ 6-3, 6-4 in just 69 minutes. Sampras took over the No. 1 ranking in the world after winning the U.S. Open title. Sunday, Agassi had lost in the first round, dropping his ATP tour ranking to No. 20. But Agassi came out with a crisp serve and was the sharper of the two players Thursday night.

Drug testing to begin at Davis Cup series

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Drug testing will be introduced at all Davis Cup series beginning in 1994, the International Tennis Federation announced Friday after its week-long conference. The ITF also formalized plans to run the Federation Cup as a year-long playoff similar to the Davis Cup, its male counterpart as an international competition among countries, beginning in 1995. In preparation for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, the membership also approved the recommendation that men's singles and doubles matches be best-of-3 sets except for the finals, which will remain best-of-5. The ITF also abolished the traditional 10-minute break after the third set of best-of-5 Davis Cup matches.

Cuban teams denied entry to U.S.

NEW YORK (AP) — Two Cuban volleyball teams will be barred from the United States for world championship qualifying matches next week because they applied for their visas too late, officials said Friday. The Cubans were to be among seven nations in the North American, Central American and Caribbean (NORCECA) Zone championships for women in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and for men in New Orleans, Louisiana. The tournaments, scheduled for September 20-25, were switched last month from Monterrey, Mexico, for financial reasons. The switch may have caught out the Cubans. The U.S. Volleyball Association said they had been told the Cubans applied for visas on September 1, and that it usually takes 21 days for a visa to be approved.

Maradona not summoned to national team

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — The list of players summoned to play for the Argentine national soccer team against Australia for a berth in the 1994 World Cup did not include star midfielder Diego Maradona, who returned recently to professional soccer in a local team, may be summoned later, an Argentine Soccer Association spokesman said. The list, released Friday, includes defenders Carlos McAllister and Victor Sotomayor, who did not play in the recent qualifying round won by Colombia. Argentina was the favorite to win the round, but was trounced twice by Colombia, 2-1 and 5-0. Argentina will play its away game with Australia October 31.

Timman, Karpov draw 7th FIDE chess game

AMSTERDAM (R) — Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman and Russian former world champion Anatoly Karpov agreed a draw after 21 moves in the seventh game of the FIDE World Chess Championship Friday. Karpov now leads the match by four points to three. The next game is in Amsterdam with Karpov having the white pieces. The winner in the 24-game match will be the first to reach 12½ points.

Burruchaga set for Independiente move

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — Jorge Burruchaga is set to return to his native Argentina with Independiente, pending the outcome of the Marseille-Valecances match-fixing scandal. Burruchaga, charged with corruption over attempts to buy the May 20 clash between the two sides, is about to seal a one-year contract with his former club. But the Buenos Aires club President Horacio Sande made it clear French justice must take its course before Burruchaga is taken on board. A meeting of the French Federation takes place Sept. 21, and action on the match-fixing scandal is scheduled to be announced the next day.

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K 8 5 3
Q 3
+ K J 8 6 3
WEST
+ J 9 5
J 10 9
Q 8 5 4
+ Q 7 5 4
SOUTH
+ A Q
A 7 6 4 2
A 7 6 2
+ A 10
The bidding:
South West North East
1 Pass 2 Pass 3 Pass
2 Pass 4 Pass 5 Pass
6 Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Jack of
Are you proud of your skill as a declarer? If so, cover up the East-West hands and decide how you would play six hearts after the lead of the diamond jack.

It is unlikely that West would lead away from the king of diamonds against a slam, but it costs nothing to try the queen from dummy. As expected, East produces the king.

CONCORD
CONCORD 1
PASSENGER 57
CONCORD 2
LAST ACTION HERO
SHOWS: 12:30, 3:15, 6, 8:15, 10:15



1992 world champion Carlos Sainz of Spain is airborne over a bump during the 1st stage of the Australian Rally (AP photo)

New Zealander dies on first day of rally

PERTH, (AP) — New Zealand co-driver Rodger Freeth died of injuries from a crash on the opening day of Rally Australia near Perth Saturday.

Freeth, 40, and his driver Possum Bourne, also from New Zealand, rolled their Subaru Legacy into a pine plantation midway through the third of the event's 34 special stages.

Freeth was airlifted to Royal Perth Hospital but died in the operating room. Bourne was also admitted to hospital but Rally Australia official Garry Connolly said Bourne's condition was stable.

It was the first fatality in Rally Australia's four-year history and was the first death in a World Rally Championship event since 1986. World rallying's governing body, FISA, will launch an inquiry into the incident, officials said.

Connolly said it was still uncertain what injuries caused Freeth's death, which occurred near York, 80 kilometres east of Perth.

From what eyewitnesses have described from the co-driver's side of the car took most of the impact of the collision," said Connolly. "That part of special stage three has two jumps and it seems the nose of the car ended up crashing straight into the ground when it came down.

"From that point the car rolled off the road. We are unsure whether the car hit a tree but the stage is through forests and pine plantations."

Connolly said the event's medical helicopter, which included a doctor, was on the scene within five minutes.

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'China will definitely go to Atlanta'

MONTE CARLO (R) — China gave a clear undertaking Saturday that it would attend the 1996 Atlanta Olympics regardless of whether Beijing wins Thursday's vote for the 2000 Games.

China's top Olympic official, He Zhenliang, made the commitment to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), IOC Director-General Francois Carrard told a news conference.

The announcement ended an apparent threat that China might not go to Atlanta if it did not win the 2000 Olympic vote.

He Zhenliang had ruled out a boycott of the 1996 Summer Games Friday but had refused at a

news conference to say that Chinese athletes would actually go to Atlanta.

Zhang Baifa, chief executive of Beijing's bid committee, said Friday a boycott was possible because of political interference by the U.S. House of Representatives, which passed a resolution in July opposing Beijing on human rights grounds.

Zhang told the official Xinhua News Agency Saturday that he had been misquoted. Beijing is competing with Sydney, Manchester, Berlin and Istanbul to host the 2000 Games.

Palestine set for Olympic recognition

MONACO (AFP) — Palestine is to become a provisional member of the International Olympic Committee, IOC Director-General Francois Carrard said Saturday, clearing the way for Palestinian athletes at the 1996 Games in Atlanta.

He doubted whether any Palestinians from Gaza or Jericho would take part in next February's Lillehammer Winter Games in Norway but expected to see them in Atlanta in three years' time.

The executive board will ask the IOC session here to ratify Palestine's membership next week, a board proposal has never been turned down.

"The athletes of Palestine will be participating, if they so wish, at all the next Olympic Games," Carrard said. "This has to be ratified by the session."

The Palestinians have been pariahs since the 1972 Olympics in Munich when a group of Black September guerrillas broke into the Olympic village, seized Israeli athletes and eventually killed 11 of them and one policeman.

Five of the guerrillas died when they attempted to take their hostages out of the country.

Carrard said the board's decision had taken account of Israeli feelings.

"It was a very black moment for the Olympics in 1972 but we are in 1995. The people (in charge of Palestine sport) can certainly not be held responsible for what took place 20 years ago," he said.

"This is a time for peace, this is a time for progress, this is a time for youth, for the Olympic movement to open its arms and its doors with respect for all other National Olympic Committees and particularly for the NOC of Israel."

He said he saw no anomaly between athletes from Gaza or Jericho competing in Atlanta and none from Nablus — which is outside this week's Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation agreement.

He did not rule out a token representation — of officials — at Lillehammer.

Palestine leader Yasser Arafat's handshake with Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin on the White House lawn in Washington on Monday had changed the situation, he said.

Palestine had applied for membership in the past but had been turned down because it had no sovereign territory.

"More than 100 states had already recognised Palestine before the PLO-Israeli agreement," he added.

Christie confirms supremacy

FUKUOKA, Japan (AP) — Olympic and world champion Linford Christie confirmed his 100m supremacy Saturday, powering past American rivals Andre Cason and Dennis Mitchell at the Fukuoka track and field meet.

Mitchell, the Olympic and the world championship bronze medalist, made a fine start and led the field in the first half of the race.

But 33-year-old Christie overtook in the last 30 metres, crossing the finishing line in 10.06sec. Casou, the runner-up at Stuttgart, again came in second in 10.14, and Mitchell third in 10.24.

Eight world record holders, led by Sergey Bubka of Ukraine and Stefka Kostadinova of Bulgaria, duly won their events respectively, but nobody managed to set a new one.

Bubka, who set the world door pole vault record of 6.13m a year ago in Tokyo, challenged 6.14m after securing top place with 5.80, beating Scott Huffman of the United States and Rodion Gataullin of Russia.

He nearly broke the record at his second jump, but his thigh nudged the bar at the last moment, disappointing spectators at the Hakatanomori Athletic Stadium, western Japan.

Kostadinova, the winner in the women's high jump with the season's best record of 2.05m, also failed 2.10m, one centimetre



Britain's Linford Christie after winning the men's 100m sprint in Stuttgart (AP photo)

Torino, Inter face tough tests in 5th round

MILAN (AP) — It's only the fifth round, but Torino is riding high on its wave. Without its much-hailed Uruguayan, Torino is 3-1-0, on top of the Italian First Division and not even worried about playing Sunday.

"We have made wonders, so far, with a shuffled team, and we want to keep it on. However a defeat would be no drama," Torino coach Emiliano Mondonico said.

Since 1949, when a plane crash wiped out the Torino team and marked the last of its four consecutive league titles, the club has won only the Italian League crown — 1976.

Climbing to the top of the serie A without Enzo Francescoli and Carlos Aguilera, still on duty with their national team in World Cup qualifying, has some people thinking title again.

Conversely, pre-season favourite Internazionale is 2-1-1, and wants to avoid falling further

behind cross-town rival AC Milan this early in the season. It travels to Rome to face Lazio.

In other games Sunday, Cremonese is in Bergamo, to play Atalanta; Cagliari is at Foggia; Napoli at Genoa; Reggiana is in Turin to play Juventus; AC Milan hosts as Roma; Sampdoria is at Udinese, and Piacenza faces Lecce.

Besides Francescoli and Aguilera, Torino also may be without Italian striker Andrea Silenzi, who has two goals already. Silenzi is sidelined with an ankle injury suffered in its 2-0 victory over Lillestrom Wednesday in the first round of the UEFA Cup.

Parma (3-0-1) will have a full-strength 11, including forward Faustino Asprilla and Carlos Aguilera, still on duty with their national team in World Cup qualifying, has some people thinking title again.

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Jordan expects World Bank to study impact of self-rule

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan is calling for the formation of a task force under the World Bank umbrella to assess the economic impact of Palestinian autonomy in the region's countries, informed sources said Saturday.

The sources said Jordan expects the World Bank to endorse the proposal at a meeting in Washington Monday, where a World Bank-prepared report on economic development for the occupied territories will be formally released and discussed.

One of the sources said Jordan had "some reservations" on the report but that these were "adequately addressed through diplomatic channels" ahead of the meeting, which will bring together Israel, Arab states, the Palestinians and donor countries.

"We expect that the Jordanian concerns will be formally addressed in a document accompanying the World Bank report," said the source.

"We are proposing the establishment of a panel entrusted with the task of assessing the economic impact of Palestinian autonomy on the countries in the region," said the source. "The study should consider the repercussions as well as the positive effects."

According to the source, the World Bank has responded positively to the Jordanian proposal, and "we hope this will be part of the decisions adopted in Washington."

Jordan, burdened with \$6.5 billion in foreign debts and continuing to strain under the severe economic blow that the Gulf crisis dealt to the Kingdom, is implementing an International Monetary Fund (IMF)-prescribed economic restructuring programme.

The World Bank is highly appreciative of the Kingdom's adherence to the programme, which could be set back if Jordan were to suffer any serious economic losses as a result of the implementation of the autonomy accord.

One of the issues Jordan hopes that the Washington meeting

would tackle is coordination of and channel through which the development programme for the occupied territories to support the Palestinian self-rule authority envisaged under the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Jordan is aware that it will find itself competing with Israel, in the short, medium and long terms," said another source who is close to the government.

"It will be ironic that Israel, by virtue of its stranglehold on the Palestinians, monopolises the rebuilding of Palestinian economy and infrastructure," said the source.

Palestinian sources said the Palestinians also had reservations over the World Bank report, mainly because it implied Israel might assume a leading role in rebuilding the West Bank and Gaza, the territories it occupied and whose infrastructure and economy were destroyed over the past 25 years.

"Let us say it clearly," said a Palestinian source. "It will be like rewarding aggression. Why should the Palestinians be forced into a corner where they have no choice but to turn to Israel? We would like to exercise free options."

Energy experts estimates the initial annual energy needs of the Palestinians at between 100 million megawatts and 150 million megawatts and say that Jordan could easily meet this requirement.

Jordan has an installed capacity of over 1,000 megawatts, and it produces up to 700 million megawatts annually. It can easily spare the overproduction with the Palestinians if a grid connection could be made between South Shuneh on the East Bank and Jericho on the West Bank.

Likewise, Jordan could meet a lot of the construction requirements of the Palestinians. It has spare capacities to produce building materials, including cement and steel.

"It is important that certain principles and groundrules are set from the very beginning," said Jordanian official. "For our part, Jordan has to move quickly to define the grey areas in the economic context of the autonomy agreement," he said, underlining that "the autonomy agreement is supposed to take effect on Oct. 13. We have very little time."

Analysts and officials say that while Jordan was not considering the autonomy agreement as a vehicle to advance its economic objectives, the Kingdom had

genuine economic concerns and claims which should be addressed.

Apart from the physical control of the land, one of the key cards that Israel wields in dealing with the Palestinians is its monopoly over essential services such as water and energy.

The occupied territories depend solely on Israeli utilities for these two vital services. In addition, the only flour mill of the size that could cater to the Palestinian needs is located in Haifa.

"It will be some time before the Palestinians will have their own water and energy networks under the economic development programme," noted the Palestinian source.

"We are aware that Israel could very well link the two services in the interim to a big chunk of the development funds."

According to the Jordanian sources, the Palestinians could actually strengthen their negotiating position with the Israelis if they had Jordanian offers.

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'ORDERLY' PROTEST: An Israeli soldier watches supporters of the Islamic movement Hamas demonstrating in the streets of Gaza City Saturday, against the Israeli-PLO agreement. Some

2,000 people marched peacefully as confrontations with Israeli security forces were avoided on both sides (AFP photo)

30 injured in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) — More than 30 people were wounded, 10 seriously, in a mortar attack near a Mogadishu hospital Saturday, as a U.S. soldier was injured in a separate mortar attack amid continued fighting in the capital.

At least 34 people were wounded when two mortar shells fell outside Difger Hospital, said its deputy director, Doctor Moham-

ad Hussein Haji.

"I heard a huge explosion," he said. "Some people in our casualty department were hurt. After five minutes came another shell. It shook the whole hospital."

Eight of the 34 wounded were discharged within hours, he said.

Most were hurt by shrapnel or splinters of glass from windows shattered by the blasts.

"Some of them are our staff. Some were patients with injuries who got new ones, and others were their relatives," he said.

Dr. Mohammad said it was unclear where the shells came from. A U.N. spokesman denied its forces were responsible for the attack.

Around the same time, a U.S. soldier was wounded in separate mortar attack on U.N. headquarters here, after U.S. Rangers had stormed a compound and detained eight Somalis, U.N. spokesman U.S. Major David Stockwell said.

Mr. Clinton discussed Somalia during a White House meeting and working lunch with Italian Prime Minister Carlo Ciampi. The two leaders later appeared at a joint news conference.

Mr. Ciampi stressed the need for diplomacy "to give a new political dimension" to U.N. intervention in Somalia. "Without this, a purely military action would not make any sense," he said.

Italy feels the United Nations is moving too aggressively against forces of fugitive warlord Mohammad Farrah Aideed, and that the focus should be more on humanitarian relief instead of confrontation.

Acknowledging differences with Italy, Mr. Clinton said, "both of us believe that some renewed political initiative in Somalia is important, because in the end there has to be a political settlement that leaves the Somalis in control of their own destiny."

On the right wing, the rural-based People's Movement (MP) won 51 seats and its rival the National People's Movement (NMP) 25, while the National Democratic Party took 24.

Four rightist parties had an absolute majority of 215 in the old chamber. This Istiqlal party won 52 seats, up from 43, and the small leftist Organisation for Democratic and Popular Action (ODAP) doubled its score to two. These brought the total opposition score to 120 seats.

The next cabinet will replace the non-party interim government led by Prime Minister Mohammad Karim Lamrani, named by the king in August last year to organise the elections.

A dozen former ministers were elected. Jewish and women candidates failed to get elected.

The highest score was achieved by the main opposition party, the socialist USFP which, with its trade union ally, the Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs Marocains (CNTM), won a total of 56 seats compared to 39 before.

Second was the centrist Constitutional Union (UC), led by former Prime Minister Maaoui Bouabid, but it won only 54 seats

in the new chamber, elected from 195 seats in the enlarged 333-member Chamber of Representatives, compared to 215 in the previous legislature of 303 seats.

The four opposition parties and their trade union allies, led by the old-guard Nationalist Istiqlal Party and the Socialist Union of Peoples Forces (USFP), took 120 seats compared to 85 before.

Nine members of the minor Democratic Independence Party (PDI), three from the independent Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) labour federation, four non-party independents and two from the rural-based Action Party also won seats.

The results issued by the Interior Ministry included the election of 222 members by direct universal suffrage on June 25 and the remaining 111 seats by indirect vote on Friday.

"The results reflect the true political map of Morocco," In-

terior Minister Driss Basri told a news conference.

Friday's vote was by members of local councils elected a year ago, by professional groups like chambers of commerce and industry, and by trade unions.

The new chamber, elected for six years, will be opened on Oct. 8 by King Hassan. He has said he will appoint a new government based on the parliamentary majority.

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The next cabinet will replace the non-party interim government led by Prime Minister Mohammad Karim Lamrani, named by the king in August last year to organise the elections.

A dozen former ministers were elected. Jewish and women candidates failed to get elected.

The highest score was achieved by the main opposition party, the socialist USFP which, with its trade union ally, the Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs Marocains (CNTM), won a total of 56 seats compared to 39 before.

Second was the centrist Constitutional Union (UC), led by former Prime Minister Maaoui Bouabid, but it won only 54 seats

in the new chamber, elected from 195 seats in the enlarged 333-member Chamber of Representatives, compared to 215 in the previous legislature of 303 seats.

The four opposition parties and their trade union allies, led by the old-guard Nationalist Istiqlal Party and the Socialist Union of Peoples Forces (USFP), took 120 seats compared to 85 before.

Nine members of the minor Democratic Independence Party (PDI), three from the independent Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) labour federation, four non-party independents and two from the rural-based Action Party also won seats.

The results issued by the Interior Ministry included the election of 222 members by direct universal suffrage on June 25 and the remaining 111 seats by indirect vote on Friday.

"The results reflect the true political map of Morocco," In-

terior Minister Driss Basri told a news conference.

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